

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-37 (canceled).

Claim 38 (withdrawn): A method of providing a pet with a benefit relating to an effective assimilation of a lipid or lipid fraction comprising the steps of administering to the pet an edible composition comprising an intestinal mucosa function-promoter in an amount effective to effect the capacity of the pet to digest lipid.

Claim 39 (withdrawn): A method according to claim 38 wherein the composition comprises

a promoter selected from the group consisting of a pancreatic function-promoter; and
a liver function promoter.

Claim 40 (withdrawn): A method according to claim 39 wherein the pancreatic function-promoter comprises a component selected from the group consisting of a lipase and a gut pH modifier.

Claim 41 (withdrawn): A method according to claim 39 wherein the liver function-promoter is selected from the group consisting of taurine, emulsifiers, vitamins, minerals, glutathione and glutathione promoters, and combinations thereof.

Claim 42 (withdrawn): The method according to claim 38 wherein the intestinal mucosa function promoter comprises a component selected from the group consisting of a fat transportation aid, agent and carrier.

Claim 43 (withdrawn): A method according to claim 38 wherein the benefit to the pet is related to at least one benefit selected from the group consisting of gut function, outward appearance, pet-to-owner relationship, aging and general health aspects.

Claim 44 (withdrawn): A method according to claim 43 wherein the benefit is related to aging of the pet, and is observable in the pet in at least one attribute selected from the group consisting of delayed onset of signs of aging; amelioration, of an age-related effect; improved vision; restored functionality of the digestive system in an aged pet; and increased longevity.

Claim 45 (withdrawn): A method according to claim 43 wherein the benefit is related to outward appearance of the pet and is observable in the pet in at least one attribute selected from the group consisting of improved body condition; improved muscle tone; improved skin and coat condition; and a younger look.

Claim 46 (withdrawn): A method according to claim 38 wherein the composition is in the form of a nutritionally balanced, ready-to-eat meal.

Claim 47 (withdrawn): A method according to claim 38 wherein the composition is in the form of a meal supplement.

Claim 48 (currently amended): A nutrition management regimen comprising a dietary component for feeding regularly, according to predetermined directions, to a pet animal, the dietary component comprising an intestinal mucosa function-promoter in an amount effective to maintain, promote or enhance the capacity of the pet to digest lipid, wherein the intestinal mucosa function-promoter comprises:

an omega-3 fatty acid derived from fish oils; and
a fat transportation aid, agent or carrier selected from the group consisting of: whey protein and proteases having the capacity to promote the formation of lipoproteins, wherein the fat transportation aid, agent or carrier comprises between about 0.1% and about 10% by weight of the dietary component on a dry matter basis.

Claim 49 (original): A regimen according to claim 48 wherein the dietary component further comprises at least one promoter selected from the group consisting of:

a pancreatic function promoter; and
a liver function promoter.

Claim 50 (original): A regimen according to claim 49 wherein the pancreatic function-promoter comprises a component selected from the group consisting of a lipase, a gut pH modifier and a pancreatic extract.

Claim 51 (original): A regimen according to claim 50 wherein the gut pH modifier includes at least one component selected from the group consisting of an acidifier, an alkalanizer, a buffer, a prebiotic and a probiotic micro-organism.

Claim 52 (original): A regimen according to claim 49 wherein the liver function-promoter is selected from the group consisting of taurine, emulsifiers, vitamins, minerals, glutathione and glutathione promoters and combinations thereof.

Claim 53 (original): A regimen according to claim 49 wherein the liver function-promoter is a nutrient that increases endogenous glutathione after ingestion.

Claim 54 (canceled).

Claim 55 (original): A regimen according to claim 49 wherein the component is selected from the group consisting of whey protein and proteases having the capacity to promote the formation of lipoproteins.

Claim 56-57 (canceled).

Claim 58 (original): A regimen according to claim 49 wherein the component has a fatty acid profile specially-selected to improve absorption.

Claim 59 (original): A regimen according to claim 58 wherein the fatty acid profile is polyunsaturated.

Claim 60 (original): A regimen according to claim 58 wherein the component comprises whey protein.

Claim 61 (withdrawn): A pet food product comprising an intestinal mucosa function-promoter in an amount sufficient to maintain, promote or enhance the capacity of the pet to digest lipid, when administered to a pet animal regularly according to predetermined directions.

Claim 62 (withdrawn): The product of claim 61 comprising an ingredient selected from the group consisting of pancreatic function-promoters and liver function-promoters and combinations thereof.

Claim 63 (withdrawn): The product of claim 61 wherein the ingredient is provided in a container for addition to a separately packaged complete meal or for administering apart from a meal.

Claim 64 (withdrawn): The product of claim 61 provided in the form of a kibble.

Claim 65 (withdrawn): The product of claim 61 provided in the form of a complete meal.

Claim 66 (withdrawn): A method for the manufacture of an edible composition for a pet to maintain, improve or enhance the capacity of the pet to digest lipid comprising the step of using an intestinal mucosa function-promoter to produce the edible composition.

Claim 67 (withdrawn): The method according to claim 66 wherein the intestinal mucosa function-promoter includes a component selected from the group consisting of a fat transportation aid, agent and carrier.

Claim 68 (withdrawn): The method according to claim 67 wherein the component is selected from the group consisting of whey protein and proteases.

Claim 69 (withdrawn): The method according to claim 66 wherein the intestinal mucosa function-promoter includes at least one of an anti-inflammatory agent, lactoferrin, a prebiotic or a probiotic micro-organism.

Claim 70 (withdrawn): The method according to claim 69 wherein the anti-inflammatory agent is an omega-3-fatty acid.

Claim 71 (withdrawn): The method according to claim 67 wherein the component has a fatty acid profile that is polyunsaturated.